



Remarks by

Janet Napolitano, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security

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Thank you, Chair, for that introduction. I am delighted to be here today among the OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation, colleagues and with friends.

So let me begin by thanking the OSCE for your important contributions.

Across more than three decades, your organization has worked to create a more just, peaceful and stable world, encouraging not only joint dialogue, but joint action – enhancing security, but also protecting liberties, and promoting economic prosperity.

Since the end of the Cold War you have worked to engage, and confront, the new challenges of our age, becoming the world's largest regional security organization, with strong partnerships not only in Europe, but across the globe.

So let me say that I am honored to be the first head of my department to speak to the OSCE.

Indeed, the OSCE and the department I lead - the United States Department of Homeland Security, or DHS – share much in common, from our cooperative - and comprehensive - approach to security, to our commitment to strong international partnerships.

We share an understanding of the inextricable link between international security and the security of our respective homelands as well as an abiding commitment to the preservation and promotion of our values and fundamental freedoms.

I am proud that over the past several years DHS has contributed to the already strong partnership between the United States and the OSCE.

And, today, I would like to discuss some of the ways in which we can – and I believe we should – work together even more closely.

Of the many challenges we share, I believe there are none more pressing than the evolving transnational threats that we confront, including threats from: terrorism and organized violent crime; narcotics smuggling and human trafficking; the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons; and the emerging threats from cyber space.

DHS and OSCE Partnership

In many areas, there already is a close cooperation and between DHS and the OSCE. In others, we have the opportunity to strengthen those bonds to build on that good work.

The U. S. Department of Homeland Security, despite its name as homeland, actually has a significant international presence, working in 75 different countries. We have the third largest international footprint of any United States government agency.

In the eight years since DHS was created, we have worked with many OSCE participating States and Partners to address transnational threats to international aviation, cargo, and – now - supply chain security.

Indeed, following the December 2009 attempted bombing of a United States-bound commercial airliner, the United States worked with a number of OSCE participating States and Partners to forge an historic Declaration on Aviation Security that will provide the framework for future improvements to international aviation security standards, technology and collaboration.

Over the past year, we also launched a Global Supply Chain Security initiative to protect the vast amount of goods and commerce that move across the world every day and that drives our global economy.

Working with many OSCE participating States and Partners and the World Customs Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization, we have embarked on a major initiative to protect the supply chain from exploitation, to strengthen critical transportation nodes, and to build more resilience into the system to recover from disruptions.

The Department of Homeland Security has also worked closely with many of you on international law enforcement efforts, including tackling financial crimes, smuggling, trafficking, and narcotics. And we have worked with the OSCE to bolster law enforcement cooperation through joint information-sharing agreements and investigations.

So, we are grateful to the continued engagement of the OSCE in these and many other efforts, through direct support, as well as capacity-building efforts. And I look forward to deepening this good work in the months ahead.

Transnational Threats and Responses

The threats we face are increasingly international in scope, planning, and execution, and they underscore that some of our greatest challenges to global security today are transnational in nature, and are rapidly evolving.

Combating these threats – and ensuring our common security – is a shared responsibility. As a result, we must increasingly focus on implementing a cooperative response, and integrating our joint efforts.

In this, the OSCE has played – and should continue to play – an important role.

Terrorism and Organized Crime

Nearly ten years after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 – and numerous attacks in many other countries – we continue to see the determination of individuals and groups to target our nations and our economies.

Terrorism, organized crime, and many other transnational threats not only target our people and our institutions; they often take aim at some of our shared – and deeply-held – values.

OSCE programs to fight terrorism and violent extremism, while ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, have helped participating States counter these threats,

including through an effective set of public-private partnership initiatives.

In a similar vein, my department has engaged with several OSCE participating States and Partners, including, for example, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, and the United Kingdom, in recent months to work together to counter violent extremism, while protecting again our human rights and our civil liberties.

Combating Trafficking in Drugs, Weapons, and People

OSCE activities to combat illicit trafficking in weapons, drugs, and people also have helped participating States stem these flows and fight organized crime.

For example, the OSCE is playing an important role in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540, which established for the first time binding obligations against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The OSCE has helped to bolster broad-based cooperation to guard against the possibility that the know-how and materials to build weapons of mass destruction will fall into the wrong hands.

We are encouraged to hear that the OSCE is planning future seminars with the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs to address best practices.

DHS looks forward to participating in these events and future partnerships with the OSCE aimed at cross-border interdiction efforts against the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

In a broader context, DHS works extensively with international partners to combat trafficking in weapons, drugs, and people. Last year the department trained hundreds of law enforcement and border authorities from more than 50 countries to combat weapons smuggling and other illicit trafficking.

I'd also like to note that in close consultation with the U.S. Department of State, and indeed with the OSCE, the Department of Homeland Security launched its Blue Campaign one year ago to better align our resources to combat human trafficking. And I want to thank the OSCE for your generous cooperation and guidance in this important work.

Let's move to Border Security and Training.

Border security is also a principal component of the OSCE's work to combat transnational threats, and much of that work is now focused on the northern border of Afghanistan. Here in particular, my Department is ready to join hands with the OSCE to a greater extent than ever before.

We have tens of thousands of officers protecting U.S. land, sea, and air borders. We harness the latest technology – from fingerprints to explosives detection. But we still also do things like patrol deserts on horseback.

I appreciate the OSCE's commitment to border management, including the development of its Border Security and Management Concept. And we look forward to deepening our partnerships to enhance security which enhances legal travel and trade.

I am pleased to send an officer, Penny Satches-Brohs, who is here today, to the OSCE Secretariat to provide leadership for the OSCE Borders Unit as we collectively work to develop and implement these important concepts.

The OSCE can and must continue to make important contributions to peace and stability in Afghanistan, an OSCE Partner for Cooperation that shares a 2,000-kilometer border with Central Asian participating States.

Strengthening security and democratic stability in Afghanistan is inextricably linked to strengthening security and democratic stability in Central Asia, and within the OSCE region as a whole.

The outcome of the international community's efforts to this end will impact all OSCE participating States and Partners, not just Afghanistan's immediate neighbors.

Increasing OSCE engagement in Central Asia is a priority for the United States. The work of the OSCE is crucial in bringing about meaningful reforms that address legitimate security concerns, while ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The United States has provided financial support and personnel to train police officers in Kyrgyzstan, and has been a strong supporter of the OSCE's Border Management Staff College in Tajikistan.

Recently, an instructor from my Department joined with Russian counterparts to teach one of these border management courses. This course provided border, customs, and drug control agency officials from across the OSCE region, including Afghanistan, with training on the law enforcement, economic, and environmental aspects of border security, as well as the human rights issues related to border security and migration.

We welcome the opportunity to expand this cooperation in the months to come. To that end, we look forward to working with Russia to jointly implement a hands-on patrolling and surveillance training program for Afghan border officials along the Afghan-Tajik border.

These activities will help strengthen border security and management while facilitating legitimate commerce and economic development, not only in Central Asia and along the region's borders with Afghanistan, but as I said before, throughout the OSCE region.

My department is also engaged in this effort on the Afghan side of the border. We are providing dozens of border mentors, and training Afghan officers at a new Customs Academy.

It is here that I would like to recognize, and appreciate, the cooperative efforts forged between that Customs Academy and the OSCE Customs Training Project in Bishkek. Three of the instructors now active in Kabul were trained through this OSCE project.

I was in Afghanistan a few months ago, indeed I was there over New Year's Eve, and I visited the border with Pakistan, and I have come to appreciate the challenges and the dedication of the officers doing that work.

Cybersecurity

Finally, we recognize that cyber security crime and warfare are one of the most serious threats of the 21st century.

The innovations cyberspace has enabled have driven advances in prosperity, transparency, and freedom that were unimaginable just a few short years ago. But with these advances have come new threats and vulnerabilities that affect every nation.

I know that this is an area of increasing attention here, and one where I hope we can deepen our

ongoing partnerships and exchange.

The OSCE's training and capacity-building efforts to combat cybercrime have assisted participating States and Partners in better identifying and responding to cyber attacks. We believe the OSCE can play a meaningful role in the development of international measures for state behavior in cyberspace, and we are eager to work with participating States to do so.

In the United States, my department leads efforts to secure cyberspace and combat many types of cybercrime, including financial crimes and the exploitation of children.

We already work closely with numerous OSCE Partner countries in exercises and daily operations, and we stand ready to do more.

Our efforts have included training in the Balkans, and have encompassed sharing best practices, raising awareness with law enforcement, and legislative reforms relating to combating cybercrime.

The United States supports the Convention on Cybercrime, which is a strong, existing framework for cooperation, and encourages countries to sign the Convention.

We welcome consideration of the establishment of a cybersecurity unit within the OSCE Secretariat with existing resources and look forward to discussing this in more detail with other OSCE participating States and Partners.

I am also pleased to see that the U.S. has taken a leadership role in the Security Committee to determine next steps for the OSCE in this important area. The Department of Homeland Security stands ready to assist.

In conclusion, I want to stress that it is crucial that we work together to tackle transnational threats.

Given the evolving nature of the threats we face today – from terrorism and organized crime to weapons smuggling, human trafficking, and cyber attacks – the expertise and adaptability of the OSCE and its tools become vitally important.

These threats are real, and they affect us all. They demand our vigilance, including vigilance in the protections of the values we cherish. They demand our willingness to learn and to adapt. And they demand our continued cooperation.

The United States shares the goal of combating transnational threats, and we share a common commitment to comprehensive security.

We believe the OSCE offers an ideal platform for enhanced cooperation, particularly with our European, Russian, Central Asian, and Afghan partners, to ensure our common security.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss these priorities today, and to renew our commitment to work together in the future to protect our nations and our peoples.

Thank you very much.